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Coordination programme and other questions: mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system

Social and human rights questions: advancement of women

Follow-up to, and progress in the implementation of, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

The present report responds to General Assembly resolution 57/182 of 18 December 2002, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report annually on the follow-up to and progress in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly with an assessment of progress made in mainstreaming a gender perspective within the United Nations system, including by providing information on key achievements, lessons learned and best practices, and to recommend further measures and strategies for future action within the United Nations system. It also responds to Economic and Social Council resolution 2002/23 of 24 July 2002.

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** Submission of the report was delayed in order to reflect the outcomes of several of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council.

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The report focuses on progress in mainstreaming a gender perspective in the work of the Economic and Social Council during its substantive session of 2002, and that of its functional commissions during their sessions held in 2003, and highlights the extent to which these intergovernmental bodies are including attention to situations that are specific to women in their work. The report gives a synopsis of the second session of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, held in 2003. The report concludes by proposing a number of further steps the Council could take to enhance attention to gender perspectives in its work and that of its subsidiary machinery.

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I. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 57/182 of 18 December 2002, requested the Secretary-General to report annually to the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on the Status of Women on follow-up to, and progress in, the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly with an assessment of progress made in mainstreaming a gender perspective within the United Nations system, including by providing information on key achievements, lessons learned and best practices, and to recommend further measures and strategies for future action within the United Nations system. Similar mandates are contained in earlier resolutions of the Assembly. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2002/23 of 24 July 2002, also requested submission of a report, including on progress in the area of gender mainstreaming, to it at its substantive session of 2003.

2. The report of the Secretary-General to the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-seventh session (E/CN.6/2003/2) covered activities of the entities of the United Nations system to enhance mainstreaming of a gender perspective in their work, and the Commission adopted a resolution on this topic (see para. 11 below). A report to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session[1] summarized the attention given to the priorities and needs of women and to gender perspectives in the work of the Assembly, and of its recent major conferences and summits.

3. The present report focuses on the work of the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary machinery, in particular its functional commissions. It reviews attention given to gender perspectives by the Council in 2002, including consideration, for the first time, of its new sub-item on "Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes of the United Nations system". The report highlights the extent to which gender issues are addressed by these intergovernmental bodies, and makes recommendations for future action.[2] The report also provides some indication of the attention given to gender issues in reports before the commissions. A summary of the second session of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, held from 24 to 27 February 2003, is included.

II. Economic and Social Council (2002)

4. The Council paid attention to gender equality issues and the advancement of women in its high-level, humanitarian affairs and general segments. Some attention was paid to gender equality and the mainstreaming of gender perspectives during the discussions in the operational activities segment. The special high-level meeting of the Council with the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization, held on 14 April 2003, also paid some attention to the gender perspectives of the issues under discussion.

A. High-level segment

5. The high-level segment of the Council focused on the contribution of human resources development, including in the areas of health and education, to the process

of development. During the general debate, many delegations drew attention to the important role women play in attaining growth and development, highlighting issues such as women's access to employment, their role in decision-making, and women's leadership. Specific attention was paid to gender issues and health, as well as the importance of gender equality in access to universal primary education.

6. The ministerial declaration on the contribution of human resources development, including in the areas of health and education, to the process of development,[3] recognized gender equality as one of the mutually reinforcing essential elements for progress in health and education. It stressed the need for gender mainstreaming in all human resources development policies and programmes, including in their design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, to be able to effectively address gender inequalities. The declaration noted full and equal access to health care and education as fundamental for the achievement of gender equality. It called for increased attention to maternal and child health and to reproductive health, and for an integrated approach to education that included girls' education.

B. Humanitarian affairs segment

7. The segment focused on strengthening the coordination of United Nations humanitarian assistance in cases of natural disasters and complex humanitarian emergencies. In the resolution adopted on this segment (resolution 2002/32), the Council stressed the continued need and relevance of integrating a gender perspective in the development and implementation of humanitarian assistance activities throughout all their phases and in prevention and recovery strategies. It also called for the adoption of measures for humanitarian assistance personnel to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation, and the misuse of humanitarian assistance.

C. General segment

8. The Council considered for the first time its new regular sub-item on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes of the United Nations system. A panel discussion held on 11 June 2002, with the participation of the Chairpersons/Vice-Chairpersons of four subsidiary bodies of the Council and senior officials of the Secretariat identified progress made, good practices, gaps and challenges in reflecting gender perspectives in sectoral areas. During the discussion of the sub-item, delegations underlined the relevance of gender mainstreaming for the work of the United Nations, but also noted that gender perspectives were not yet consistently addressed, and decisions were not always based on an understanding of such perspectives.

9. In its resolution on this issue (resolution 2002/23), the Council expressed appreciation to its subsidiary bodies for the progress made in giving attention to situations specific to women and to the mainstreaming of gender perspectives in their work. It called on them to intensify these efforts, and to also address gender perspectives in relation to thematic issues and annual themes. The Council invited its Bureau to consider the question of gender mainstreaming, including enhanced coordination in this regard, in joint bureaux meetings with subsidiary bodies. It also stressed the importance of presenting issues and approaches in reports to

intergovernmental bodies in a gender-sensitive manner to support gender-sensitive policy formulation.

III. Results of the forty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women

10. The Commission on the Status of Women held its forty-seventh session from 3 to 14 March and on 25 March 2003. In implementing its catalytic role in support of gender mainstreaming, the Commission transmitted its agreed conclusions as an input to the World Summit on the Information Society. For the information of the Council at its high-level segment of 2003, the Commission also provided an input on promoting an integrated approach to rural development in developing countries for eradication of poverty and sustainable development (E/CN.6/2003/CRP.4). The Chairperson of the Commission, the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs participated in the Council's panel discussion on gender mainstreaming.

11. Other actions aimed at strengthening attention to gender perspectives included a resolution in which the Commission noted progress made in mainstreaming a gender perspective in the United Nations system. Specifically, it requested the Council to consider deciding to devote its coordination segment in 2004 to a review and appraisal of the system-wide implementation of its agreed conclusions 1997/2 on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system.[4] The Commission's resolution on women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS invited the Secretary-General to take a gender perspective into account in his reports on HIV/AIDS. The Commission's draft resolution for action by the Council on the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan addresses recommendations to the national authorities as well as to the United Nations system and donors that aim at provision of targeted support to women, as well as strengthening attention to gender perspectives in all areas.

12. The Commission held its first high-level round table on national experience in institutional capacity-building, with a specific focus on the two themes of the session. The round table provided an opportunity for senior representatives from capitals to engage in a free-flowing, interactive dialogue and to share practical experiences, lessons learned and obstacles encountered in institutional capacity-building. Participants welcomed this new aspect of the Commission's methods of work and its focus on implementation. One of the main issues discussed was the role of national machineries in supporting the use of the gender mainstreaming strategy, especially in line ministries and by other stakeholders. A summary by the Chairperson (E/CN.6/2003/CRP.8) was included in the report of the Commission.

Agreed conclusions on participation in and access of women to the media, and information and communication technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women[5]

13. This was the first time that the Commission dealt with the question of gender equality in relation to information and communications technologies (ICT), and its agreed conclusions are the first comprehensive intergovernmental statement on this issue. At the same time, it continued its long-standing work on women and the

media. The Commission stressed the need to focus on the gender dimensions of ICT in order to prevent and combat any adverse impact of the digital revolution on gender equality, and to enhance the central role of ICT and media for women's empowerment and the promotion of gender equality.

14. The Commission agreed on a series of actions addressed to Governments and, as appropriate, to other stakeholders, aimed at enhancing women's access to and use of media and ICT, at integrating gender perspectives in national policies, legislation, programmes and regulatory instruments, and at creating monitoring and accountability mechanisms to ensure implementation.

15. Specific actions cover women's and girls' education and training in ICT-related fields; women's access to ICT-based economic activities and employment; and removal of ICT-related infrastructural barriers that disproportionately affect women and girls. The Commission proposed steps to combat the negative aspects of ICT and the media, such as negative or stereotyped portrayal of women, and the criminal misuse of ICT for sexual exploitation and trafficking in women and girls. It called for research, and for increased efforts to compile statistics disaggregated by sex and age and the development of gender-specific indicators on ICT use and needs.

16. Actions encourage partnerships to build women's capacity for participation, including in decision-making at all levels in ICT and media, and in e-governance, and focus on the role of national machineries as advocates for attention to gender perspectives in the media and the ICT sector and South–South cooperation. The Commission called for international cooperation in support of national efforts to create an enabling environment to reduce the digital and information divide between developed and developing countries.

IV. Results of sessions of other functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council

A. Commission for Social Development

17. At its forty-first session, held from 10 to 21 February 2003, the Commission for Social Development considered the priority theme of national and international cooperation for social development. It also undertook a review of relevant United Nations plans and programmes of action pertaining to the situation of social groups. The Chairperson of the Commission and the Director of the Division for Social Policy and Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs participated in the Council's panel discussion on gender mainstreaming.

18. The report of the Secretary-General on the priority theme and its five sub-themes (E/CN.5/2003/5 and Corr.1) draws from the results of two expert group meetings. Some attention to gender perspectives and the concerns and priorities of women is reflected in several of the report's sections on the sub-themes, as well as in the recommendations of the report. For example, with regard to the topic of sharing experiences and practices in social development, the report notes a link between capacity-building and the changing of values and norms in support of gender equality. It suggests that increased citizen participation enhances national capacity to deal with social issues and brings desired empowerment to women and

minorities. It identifies gender mainstreaming as a means for enhancing collaboration aimed at empowerment. It further finds that the scope and mandate of many national aid agencies have been broadened to include attention to gender equality. With regard to the sub-theme on the impact of employment strategies on social development, the report points to experience that indicates that reducing or ending discrimination in education against women tends to lead to higher female earnings, greater investment in healthier and better-educated children and a lower rate of population growth.

19. In one of its policy recommendations, the report highlights the importance that employment strategies target equality of opportunities for women, which could both empower women and produce positive results for social development.

20. According to the report of the Board of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) on activities undertaken in 2001 and 2002 (E/CN.5/2003/2), several activities either have gender components, or are focused on gender equality issues. For example, the Institute published a number of books and issued programme papers on topics such as gender justice, development and rights; on women's employment in the textile manufacturing sectors; on gender and education; and on the links between sex trafficking and vulnerability to human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS). As one of the components of its work on social policy in a development context, the Institute is exploring the gender issues of the impact of globalization on social policy provision. Another project covers issues of agrarian change, gender and land rights.

21. The World Youth Report 2003 (E/CN.5/2003/4) reviewed the 10 priority areas of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond, one of which deals with girls and young women. That section identifies challenges such as gender-based stereotyping, discrimination and its consequences for the health and well-being of girls and young women, and violence against women. The report notes that gender-based stereotyping and discrimination continued to affect educational attainment. It addresses the situation of girls also in relation to other priority areas, such as education, employment, and health issues, and discusses the situation of girls and young women in regard to HIV/AIDS. With regard to gender balance in participation in the World Youth Forum, a survey found that 63 per cent of the participants in the Forum were male.

22. The report on preparations for the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2004 (E/CN.5/2003/6) notes that Member States identified gender equality and the situation of women in the family as one of the priority issues deserving special attention.

23. The draft programme of work of the Division for Social Policy and Development for the biennium 2004-2005 (E/CN.5/2003/8) identified as one of its expected accomplishments the achievement of a better understanding and awareness by Governments, civil society and the private sector with regard to emerging issues in the field of social development, including gender issues.

24. In the annex to its resolution 2003/41/1 containing the agreed conclusions on the theme of the session, the Commission for Social Development underlined the responsibility of the private sector at the national and international levels regarding, inter alia, the development, social, gender and environmental implications of their

activities. It recommended promotion of cross-sectoral and integrated policies that took into account the needs and interests of all members of society and that mainstreamed a gender perspective. The Commission noted that employment strategies could have a substantial impact on poverty eradication, social development and gender equality and called for their development in harmony with economic growth strategies and structural reforms.

25. A draft resolution submitted for action to the Economic and Social Council on policies and programmes involving youth (E/CN.5/2003/L.4) would recognize the importance of the five emerging issues of concern to young people, including the mixed impact of globalization on young women and men. The Council would recognize the need to support the activities of youth mechanisms that have been set up by youth and youth organizations, bearing in mind that girls, boys, young women and men had the same rights but different needs and strengths and were active agents for decision-making processes, positive change and development in society.

26. In a preambular paragraph of a draft resolution for action by the General Assembly on preparations for the observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2004 (E/CN.5/2003/L.8), the Assembly would emphasize that equality between women and men and respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms of all family members were essential to family well-being and to society at large, would note the importance of reconciliation of work and family life and would recognize the principle that both parents have common responsibilities for the upbringing and development of the child.

B. Statistical Commission

27. The thirty-fourth session of the Statistical Commission was held from 4 to 7 March 2003. In accordance with the Commission's multi-year programme of work, gender statistics were most recently on the agenda in 2001. The Commission's proposed multi-year programme of work to 2006 does not include specific consideration of gender statistics.

28. Several reports before the Statistical Commission included references to gender statistics. In response to a previous request by the Commission for a more systematic development of social statistics, the United Nations Statistics Division reported, inter alia, on the production of a technical report reviewing national statistics on gender for the period 1955 to 2005; and that a review of all *Demographic Yearbook* topics covered by age and sex in its questionnaires and tabulations was under way. The Division was also planning to merge the web site on *World's Women* statistics and indicators with the web site on social indicators by 2004 (see E/CN.3/2003/7, para. 14). One of the Division's current statistical capacity-building programmes covered social and gender statistics (see E/CN.3/2003/23). One of the expected accomplishments in the draft programme of work of the Division for the biennium 2004-2005 was to enhance the comparability of statistics among countries through applying standardized methods and procedures for the measurement of economic and social phenomena, including poverty and gender equality (see E/CN.3/2003/29, annex).

29. In follow-up to Council resolution 2002/23 on gender mainstreaming, the United Nations Statistics Division noted that gender mainstreaming was reflected in the range of development indicators considered by the Commission in the context of

follow-up to the United Nations Millennium Declaration and United Nations conferences and summits. The Division's database on the indicators contained data broken down by sex to the extent possible (see E/CN.3/2003/28).

30. In the area of health statistics, several reports from national bureaux of statistics provided information about attention to women's health issues within national health surveys (Australia, E/CN.3/2003/4), in monitoring of HIV/AIDS (Botswana, E/CN.3/2003/5 and Corr.1), and in regard to health accounts (European Communities, E/CN.3/2003/6).

31. The actions taken by the Statistical Commission did not refer explicitly to questions of disaggregation of data by sex, or to gender statistics or related matters. With regard to the Council's policy guidance, including gender mainstreaming, the Commission agreed that the actions outlined in response to such policy decisions were consistent with the Council's requests and adequately reflected the relevant work being undertaken and planned by the Commission and the United Nations Statistics Division.

C. Commission on Human Rights

32. The Commission on Human Rights held its fifty-ninth session from 17 March to 25 April 2003. As in previous years, the Chairpersons of the Commission on the Status of Women and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women addressed the Commission. For the first time, the Chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights addressed the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-seventh session.

33. The Commission continues to address under a specific agenda item the human rights of women. In three resolutions, as compared to five in 2002, the Commission focused on particular aspects of the human rights of women, including: women's equal ownership, access to and control over land and the equal rights to own property and to adequate housing (resolution 2003/22); integration of the human rights of women throughout the United Nations system (resolution 2003/44); and the elimination of violence against women (resolution 2003/45). The mandate of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences was renewed for a period of three years (ibid.). Consideration of the questions on violence against women migrant workers has been biennialized, and no resolution was introduced on traffic in women and girls.

34. The Commission also highlighted the need to address the gender perspectives or gender dimensions in relation to many of the questions on its agenda, and used in many instances language similar to that of previous resolutions on the same subject.

1. Country-specific resolutions

35. The Commission addressed the particular situation of women in many of its country-specific resolutions, along the lines of past resolutions, for example with regard to Cambodia (resolution 2003/79); the Democratic Republic of the Congo (resolution 2003/15); and the human rights situation of the Lebanese detainees in Israel (resolution 2003/8). In other instances, the Commission expressed similar concerns, or used broadened or slightly changed approaches to address gender dimensions (see resolution 2003/80 on Sierra Leone, resolution 2003/16 on Burundi

and resolution 2003/78 on Somalia). For example, in addition to the concerns expressed in 2002, the Commission emphasized the need to integrate a gender perspective into all peace-building, reconstruction and reconciliation processes in Somalia. Less attention was given to women's human rights in relation to Myanmar (resolution 2003/12).

36. Contrary to the resolutions adopted in 2002, the current year's resolutions did not request the Special Rapporteurs for Myanmar and the Democratic Republic of the Congo to include a gender-specific dimension in their work.

37. In its resolution on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (resolution 2003/10), the Commission also expressed its concern about the continued violations of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of women.

38. With respect to Afghanistan, the Commission welcomed ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and invited the Special Rapporteur on violence against women to continue to review the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan (resolution 2003/77). The resolution contains a number of elements similar to those adopted at the forty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women, including the need to ensure women's full participation in decision-making processes, to protect women from all forms of violence, and to provide adequate support to the Women's Ministry.

2. Issue-specific resolutions

39. As in 2002, Special Rapporteurs and Working Groups were encouraged to mainstream or continue to mainstream gender perspectives in the fulfilment of their mandates (see resolution 2003/25 on the right to food; resolution 2003/54 on elimination of all forms of religious intolerance; resolution 2003/56 on human rights and indigenous issues; and resolution 2003/38 on enforced or involuntary disappearances. However, contrary to the resolution of 2002, no such encouragement was given to the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions (see resolution 2003/53).

40. The Commission highlighted once again the need to apply gender perspectives in a number of areas, such as racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance (see resolution 2003/30); torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (resolution 2003/32); the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic religious and linguistic minorities (resolution 2003/50). It welcomed the Ministerial Declaration adopted on the occasion of the Third World Water Forum, held in Kyoto, Japan, on 23 March 2003 which called for due regard to gender perspectives in water policies (resolution 2003/71).

41. As in 2002, the Commission adopted resolutions that also highlighted the situation of women's human rights: including on the right to education (resolution 2003/19); extreme poverty (resolution 2003/24); adequate housing (resolution 2003/27); freedom of opinion and expression (resolution 2003/42); migrants, internally displaced persons, and mass exoduses (resolutions 2003/46, 2003/51 and 2003/52); religious intolerance (resolution 2003/54); human rights defenders (resolution 2003/64); death penalty (resolution 2003/67); impunity (resolution 2003/72). New elements contained in issue-specific resolutions include references to the special human rights needs and situations of women in a number of areas, such as pregnant women's vulnerability to malaria (resolution 2003/29); those in relation

to the HIV/AIDS pandemic (resolution 2003/47); and to prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building (resolution 2003/42). Resolution 2003/72 on impunity stressed the importance of bringing to justice those responsible for gender-related crimes and crimes of sexual violence in defined circumstances. Resolution 2003/52 on human rights and mass exoduses recognized that refugee and displaced women and girls are particularly vulnerable to persecution, gender-based discrimination and gender-specific violations of human rights.

D. Commission on Population and Development

42. The theme of the thirty-sixth session of the Commission on Population and Development, held from 31 March to 4 April 2003, was population, education and development. The concise report on world population monitoring 2003 (E/CN.9/2003/2) covered trends in population, education and development, including a review and update of the relationships between education and the main demographic areas with attention to entry into reproductive life, fertility, desired family size and family planning, health and mortality, and international migration. The report and its conclusions addressed gender disparities and differences, and the situation of women, especially in relation to school enrolment and literacy, marriage, fertility and family planning, and health and mortality.

43. According to the report on monitoring of population programmes (E/CN.9/2003/3), which also focused on the theme of the session, addressing illiteracy and eliminating gender disparities were among the major challenges in progress towards the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development.[6] In its conclusions, the report recommended that United Nations entities and their partners continue to advocate for national education policies and programmes that maximize female enrolment and continuation at school, promote the value of girl children to both their families and society, and mobilize community participation in support of education for all.

44. The report on the flow of financial resources for assisting in the implementation of the Programme of Action (E/CN.9/2003/4) drew attention to the need for additional resources to support programmes that address the broader population and development objectives, including those that sought to improve the status and empowerment of women.

45. According to the report on world demographic trends (E/CN.9/2003/5), the majority of older persons are women. Female life expectancy is higher than life expectancy for males in all regions, and has increased more than that of males during the last half century in Asia, Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean. The report also discussed trends in various regions on the scope and methods of contraception use by married and in-union women.

46. In the report on programme implementation and progress of work in the field of population in 2002 (E/CN.9/2003/6), the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs summarized its activities, including gender-specific work, in areas such as contraceptive use, trends in women's age of marriage, and women's awareness and behaviour relative to HIV/AIDS.

47. At its intersessional meeting the Bureau of the Commission also reviewed interaction between the Commission on Population and Development and the Commission on the Status of Women. At a meeting of the Chairpersons of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council it was agreed the gender mainstreaming should be integrated into the work of the commissions (E/CN.9/2003/8).

48. In its resolution on the special theme of the session, the Commission requested the Population Division to continue its research, and the United Nations Population Fund to continue its programming on the linkages between population, education and development, and to pay attention to the way in which education interacts with health, particularly sexual and reproductive health, including HIV/AIDS, and to the way in which education influences the levels, trends and differentials of mortality, fertility, distribution and mobility, and the role of population and development policies, as well as gender inequalities in such levels, trends and differentials. In a decision, the Commission agreed that population, development and HIV/AIDS, with particular emphasis on poverty, would be its special theme in 2005.

E. Commission on Narcotic Drugs

49. The forty-sixth session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs took place from 8 to 17 April 2003.

50. In his progress report on management reform (UNODC/ED/1), the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime stated that among the Office's guiding principles for operational priorities was to take into account gender-sensitive issues.

51. The second biennial report on the implementation of the outcome of the twentieth special session of the General Assembly (A/CN.7/2003/2 and Add.1-6) synthesized information provided by Member States on their efforts to meet the goals and targets for the year 2003, and paid particular attention to the progress achieved and setbacks in combating the world drug problem. The analysis showed that, for example, a substantial share (one third) of programmes dealing with drug abuse prevention and treatment and the rehabilitation of drug abusers (with the exception of those in the workplace setting) were reported to be gender-sensitive. Gender sensitivity was also found in the context of alternative development programmes, information and education about drugs and drug abuse, development of life skills, provision of alternatives to drug use, detoxification services, substitution treatment, non-pharmacological treatment, social integration. The report noted that the criteria on which the judgement of gender-sensitivity was based remained unclear, and suggested that this could be a topic of more detailed consideration and discussion in the future.

52. The report on optimizing systems for collecting information and identifying best practices to counter the demand for illicit drugs (E/CN.7/2003/8 and Add.1) highlighted that in almost all areas of demand reduction, the proportion of States reporting on gender-sensitive programmes had declined.

53. As part of its comprehensive strategy to counter illicit drugs and crime in Afghanistan, the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) assessed the role of microfinance as a financing alternative to the current lending

practices for the various components within the opium market, including the current work of women and children in the poppy fields. As part of its support for alternative crop development in Bolivia, UNDCP provided revolving funds for the purchase of input to numerous microenterprises, many managed by women's groups and young people (see E/CN.7/2003/13).

54. In the proposed revised budget for the biennium 2002-2003 and the proposed outline for the biennium 2004-2005 for the Fund of UNDCP (E/CN.7/2003/15), emphasis would be placed on implementing operational priorities with attention to gender sensitivity. Further efforts would be made to improve the access of women to all alternative development project activities.

55. Among the outcomes of the Commission's session was a Joint Ministerial Statement and further measures to implement the action plans emanating from the twentieth special session of the General Assembly (E/CN.7/2003/L.23/Rev.1). Regarding trafficking in human beings, the statement singled out its concerns about trafficking in women and children.[2]

F. Commission on Sustainable Development

56. The eleventh session of the Commission on Sustainable Development was held from 28 April to 9 May 2003. Participants in the high-level and multi-stakeholder segments stressed the need to ensure attention to gender equality in the implementation of the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation),[7] and to mainstream gender issues in the future work of the Commission, as well as the importance of gender balance in all meetings of the Commission.

57. The Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development[8] contained a commitment to ensuring that women's empowerment, emancipation and gender equality were integrated in all the activities encompassed within Agenda 21,[9] the Millennium Development Goals and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. The report on follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the future role of the Commission (E/CN.17/2003/2) focused on implementation of the Plan, presenting a range of proposals. Among the considerations for designing the future programme and organization of work of the Commission these proposals suggested a need to complement and avoid duplication of work undertaken by other intergovernmental forums, such as the Commission on the Status of Women, and to address gender issues within implementation of the Plan.

58. In the Commission's draft resolution for adoption by the Economic and Social Council on the future programme, organization and methods of work of the Commission on Sustainable Development, gender equality is included as one of the cross-cutting issues to be addressed in relation to the thematic clusters of every cycle. Furthermore, activities during meetings of the Commission should provide for balanced involvement of participants from all regions as well as for gender balance.

G. Commission on Science and Technology for Development

59. At its sixth session, held from 5 to 9 May 2003, the Commission on Science and Technology for Development considered as the substantive theme of the session

the question of technology development and capacity-building for competitiveness in a digital society, with particular attention to information and communication technologies (ICT) as pervasive technologies of global impact, wide application and growing potential.

60. The Commission held three intersessional panels. One of the policy recommendations of the panels to enhance strategic competitiveness of ICT, directed at the Commission, was to ensure that all its programmes take into account the need to meaningfully and systematically integrate gender equality principles, and improved collaboration between the Commission and its Gender Advisory Board (see E/CN.16/2003/2).

61. The note by the secretariat on the functioning of the Commission and its coordinating role (E/CN.16/2003/5) emphasized the collaborative linkages between the work of its Gender Advisory Board, established to examine gender implications of science and technology, and the Commission on the Status of Women and its secretariat. Its Gender Advisory Board had also benefited from support from the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Development Fund for Women.

62. In the draft resolution for adoption by the Economic and Social Council on the theme, the Council would request the Commission to take into account the need to meaningfully and systematically integrate a gender component into all its programmes, and to improve its collaboration with its Gender Advisory Board.

H. Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

63. The twelfth session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice was scheduled to take place from 13 to 22 May 2003,[2] with the overall theme of trafficking in human beings, especially women and children. The Vice-Chairperson of the Commission and the Executive Director of the Centre for International Crime Prevention participated in the Council's panel on gender mainstreaming.

64. The report on the theme (E/CN.15/2003/3) covered several sub-themes, and addressed issues such as the gender and human rights perspectives in criminal justice responses. It drew attention to the results of the expert group meeting on trafficking in women and girls, held in Glen Cove, New York, 18-22 November 2002, which the Centre had organized jointly with the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. As an example of cooperative efforts between the United Nations and the private sector to mobilize funds for development initiatives, the report mentioned the support by the United Nations Foundation to the United Nations Inter-Agency Project on Trafficking in Women and Children in the Mekong Subregion. The Executive Director of the Centre also reported that one of the main priorities of the Centre's technical cooperation activities was to foster international cooperation and strengthen national capacity-building in combating trafficking in persons, especially women and children; and to ensure effective policy interventions in the area of violence against women (see E/CN.15/2003/2).

65. The report on the activities of the institutes comprising the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme network (E/CN.15/2003/4)

described a significant number of activities relating to the issues of violence against women, trafficking in women, women in prisons, gender perspectives in the judicial systems, gender and crime prevention, and incorporation of gender perspectives in legal training programmes.

66. In response to a questionnaire on the practice of kidnapping and its extent, several Member States reported instances of kidnapping for purposes of sexual exploitation, including trafficking in women and children, and measures taken against such occurrences (see E/CN.15/2003/7 and Add.1). A report on illicit trafficking in protected species of wild flora and fauna and illicit access to genetic resources (E/CN.15/2003/8) concluded that organized criminal groups and networks had the capacity to diversify into new areas and into areas where penalties were less severe, such as trafficking in women. With regard to the application of United Nations standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice, several Member States as well as non-governmental organizations reported about activities targeted at women (see E/CN.15/2003/10 and Add.2). On the same issue, a meeting of experts recommended that information-gathering mechanisms should bear in mind gender as a cross-cutting issue, and that gender equality should be included in one of the clusters of standards and norms. Work on that cluster should be pursued in close collaboration with the Division for the Advancement of Women, and focus on the special needs of women as criminal justice practitioners, victims, prisoners and offenders (see E/CN.15/2003/10/Add.1).

67. With regard to preparations for the Eleventh United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, views of relevant bodies of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations also reflected those presented by the Division for the Advancement of Women, suggesting that attention should be given to the issue of trafficking in women and girls, and that gender perspectives should be an integral part of any discussions and final document of the Congress and its regional preparatory meetings. The International Council of Women expressed its interest in cooperating with the Commission on all issues relevant to the status of women (see E/CN.15/2003/11 and Corr.1).

68. According to the proposed programme of work for the biennium 2004-2005 in crime prevention and criminal justice (E/CN.15/2003/12), the Centre for International Crime Prevention would pay special attention to effective gender mainstreaming in all relevant areas of work.

I. United Nations Forum on Forests

69. The third session of the United Nations Forum on Forests, scheduled to take place from 26 May to 6 June 2003,[2] is expected to consider progress in implementation in regard to three issues, namely, economic aspects of forests, forest health and productivity, and the maintenance of forest cover to meet present and future needs. The Chairperson of the United Nations Forum on Forests and the Head of the Forum's secretariat participated in the Council's panel discussion on gender mainstreaming.

70. The report on economic aspects of forests (E/CN.18/2003/7), recognized that well-functioning markets, from local village-level consumer markets to industrial and international markets, could generate a more equitable distribution of forestry benefits within communities and families, in particular for women. Experiences

from several countries indicated that community management of forests had led to significant increases in incomes and economic surpluses and to improvements in the status of women and better nutrition for girl children. The report suggested promoting public participation by involving women and indigenous peoples, and considering questions of access for communities, families and women in the full and efficient utilization of wood and non-wood forest products and in terms of distribution of forest benefits. The report on enhanced cooperation and policy and programme coordination (E/CN.18/2003/6) indicated that the Forum secretariat had facilitated the establishment of a global Forum network of focal points for major groups, including for women.

71. In accordance with the Forum's methods of work, nine major groups, including a women's group, participate in the multi-stakeholder dialogue. The discussion paper submitted by that group (E/CN.18/2003/2/Add.5) described steps taken in various countries towards ensuring equity and sustainability within the forest sector, obstacles that women had encountered in implementing sustainable forest management, as well as women's recommendations to Governments and international forest policy makers to enhance partnerships with women on forest-related issues.

72. The report of the intersessional experts meeting on the role of planted forests in sustainable forest management, held from 25 to 27 March 2003 in New Zealand (E/CN.18/2003/10), emphasized that planted forests had the potential to provide for sustainable livelihoods, generate community and low investment entrepreneurial opportunities and empower people living in poverty, and could in particular alleviate the disproportionate impact of poverty on women.

73. The Collaborative Partnership on Forests, an innovative arrangement to foster increased cooperation and coordination on forests among its 14 members consisting of international organizations, institutions and convention secretariats, established in March 2002 an informal network to facilitate cooperation, interface and communication with a wide range of other partners, including one women's organization (see E/CN.18/2003/INF.1).

V. Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality

74. The Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality held its second session in New York from 24 to 27 February 2003. The session was chaired by the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women on behalf of the United Nations. The Network, which consists of senior gender focal points of the United Nations system, holds one annual session and conducts its intersessional activities through a number of task forces, by electronic means, and informal meetings. The annual session provides an opportunity to discuss emerging trends and challenges in the promotion of gender equality and to enhance integrated approaches through inter-agency cooperation.

75. During the past year, eight task forces covered a broad range of issues. Outputs included the study submitted by the Secretary-General entitled *Women, Peace and Security*;[10] case studies on gender mainstreaming in programme budgets; the organization of a day of dialogue on gender and financing for development as well as the publication and wide dissemination of a report on that issue; efforts to support integration of gender perspectives in the World Summit on the Information Society

process; a gender analysis of documents of the Common Country Assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework; maintenance and expansion of WomenWatch; ongoing links with the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination; and the development of gender indicators by the regional commissions.

76. At the annual session, members of the Network emphasized the importance of inter-agency cooperation in various areas as many of the long-standing challenges and newly emerging issues affecting gender equality were of concern to many entities of the United Nations. Integrated rather than sectoral approaches would have to be strengthened in the promotion of gender equality, for example, in the areas of poverty reduction and work/employment; access to and use of ICT; violence against women and the role of men; and humanitarian crises where HIV/AIDs, drought, and famine intersected.

77. While successful policies on gender mainstreaming had been developed, more work had to be done to strengthen monitoring and evaluation, which required sufficient human and financial resources, the selection of indicators, the dissemination of evaluations and their use for the development of new strategies and overall policy frameworks. High priority should be placed on monitoring attention to gender perspectives in the implementation of existing policies and in follow-up activities to major United Nations conferences, including the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the International Conference on Financing for Development.

78. The Network set up three new Task Forces on gender perspectives in relation to the Millennium Development Goals, trade and water, respectively. The Network also held a one-day workshop on incorporating gender perspectives into the preparations of, and follow-up to global conferences. Members discussed experiences and lessons learned from their efforts to enhance attention to gender perspectives in preparatory processes, both within the entities themselves and at the inter-agency level, as well as within intergovernmental processes. These experiences provided useful insights for ensuring that gains made in outcome documents of conferences were fully implemented. The role of gender focal points within entities was critical, especially their capacity to secure access to timely information and participation in relevant events. The workshop thus recommended to place particular emphasis on their role in follow-up and implementation processes.

79. In order to ensure high-level support and inter-agency coordination on gender mainstreaming, the Network continued to maintain regular contact with the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and the two high-level committees on management and on programmes. Through its Chairperson, the Network brought a number of issues highlighted during the session to the attention of the high-level committees, such as the importance of linking gender equality to all Millennium Development Goals; continuing attention to gender perspectives in the follow-up to major conferences such as the International Conference on Financing for Development; integration of gender perspectives into the forthcoming World Summit on the Information Society; full implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security by all relevant actors; and increased efforts to integrate gender perspectives in national and regional planning processes (Common Country Assessment, United Nations Development Assistance

Framework, poverty reduction strategy papers and the New Partnership for Africa's Development).

VI. Conclusions

80. Reports on progress, challenges and gaps in gender mainstreaming, at both the intergovernmental level and at the level of the entities of the United Nations system, have been submitted to the respective intergovernmental bodies for several years. The insights gained during their consideration provide a strong basis for a review and appraisal by the Council of the system-wide implementation of its agreed conclusions 1997/2 at a coordination segment before 2005.

81. During the period reviewed for the present report, the Council and all subsidiary bodies that had already completed their sessions reflected to some degree the concerns of women or gender perspectives in their work. The new agenda item of the Council provides a significant opportunity to further deepen the understanding of gender perspectives and the practical implications in relation to the full scope of the work of the Council and that of its subsidiary mechanisms. No assessment was undertaken of the consideration given to the question of gender mainstreaming in the meetings the Bureau of the Council with the bureaux of its subsidiary bodies as this issue is addressed elsewhere (consolidated report on the work of the functional commissions).

82. The Council and commissions have reiterated gender equality as a goal in itself, as well as a means in the more effective pursuit of their specific mandates. This was, for example, the case in the Council's high-level segment of 2002, which underlined the link between access to health care and education and gender equality, in the Commission for Social Development, noting the link between employment strategies and gender equality, or in the Population Commission, which called for attention to the link between education, various demographic factors, and gender inequalities. Other commissions highlighted gender equality as a cross-cutting issue, as was the case in the decision of the Commission for Social Development on its multi-year programme of work.

83. The Council and commissions have continued, in general terms, to call for the mainstreaming of gender perspectives in relation to issues under consideration. This was, for example, the case in the Council's humanitarian affairs segment, and in many resolutions of the Commission on Human Rights. Likewise, the Statistical Commission referred to the adequacy of the measures taken in follow-up to the Council's guidance on gender mainstreaming. In these instances, however, little additional specific guidance was provided as to how gender mainstreaming could or should be implemented in practice.

84. Interaction between the Commission on the Status of Women and other functional commissions, and use of its work by the Council and its subsidiary machinery has been uneven. For example, the Commission continues its regular interaction with the Commission on Human Rights, and some interaction has taken place with the Commission on Population and Development, the Commission for Social Development and on the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. There was no apparent reference to the Commission's agreed conclusions on environmental management and mitigation of natural disasters when the Council, in its humanitarian affairs segment of 2002, addressed a related topic. The Commission

on Science and Technology for Development did not refer to the Commission's agreed conclusions of 2003 on gender equality in relation to ICT.

85. The Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality has expanded its efforts to support gender mainstreaming in a growing number of sectors, and has also taken steps to encourage the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and its high-level committees to address the gender perspectives of issues on their agenda.

86. As in 2002, a significant number of reports submitted to the Council and the commissions now include attention to the concerns of women or draw attention to gender perspectives. This appears to facilitate attention to such issues in the discussions and outputs of the relevant intergovernmental bodies. It therefore seems especially critical to continue those efforts, as well as to deepen the analysis and make it more systematic, including by using data disaggregated by sex and gender-specific studies and information in order to present relevant gender perspectives of all issues covered in reports.

VII. Recommendations

87. Based on the analysis of the work of the Council and its subsidiary bodies in 2002 and 2003, the following recommendations are presented to the Council for its consideration.

88. The Council may wish to decide to devote its coordination segment of 2004 to a review and appraisal of the system-wide implementation of its agreed conclusions 1997/2 on gender mainstreaming.

89. The Council may wish to express its appreciation to its subsidiary machinery for their continuing attention to gender perspectives and to increased use of the gender mainstreaming strategy. It may in particular encourage them to strengthen practical guidance provided in resolutions, decisions and agreed conclusions, as applicable, so as to accelerate the consistent use of the gender mainstreaming strategy in all policies and programmes, and at all levels.

90. The Council could also encourage relevant commissions to take additional steps to address gender aspects within their mandates, including by visibly incorporating such aspects in multi-year programmes of work or thematic discussions.

91. The Council may also commit itself, and urge the commissions to use more systematically the work of the Commission on the Status of Women on related topics under consideration by them.

92. The Council may wish to call for continuing efforts to include attention to gender equality in reports submitted to the Council and its subsidiary machinery, and especially to enhance their analysis of gender perspectives and related recommendations.

Notes

[1] A/57/286.

[2] The results of the United Nations Forum on Forests, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and parts of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs were not available by the time of finalization of the report and are thus not reflected.

[3] See A/57/3 (Part I), chap. For the final text, see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-seventh Session, Supplement No.3*.

[4] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 3* (A/52/3/Rev.1), chap. IV, sect. A, para. 4.

[5] As no consensus was achieved, the Commission did not adopt the agreed conclusions on the second thematic issue.

[6] *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[7] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

[8] Ibid., resolution 1, annex.

[9] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex II.

[10] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.IV.1.